Norms for opening new post offices

3701. SHRI BASUDEB MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to ban on creation of new posts no progress of extension of postal network has taken place during 1987-88;

(b) if so, whether the ban order has now been removed;

(c) what are the norms and new guidelines issued by the Department for opening new post offices in rural and urban areas;

(d) whether new scheme known as "Panchayat Dak Seb.ka" has been introduced in Gram Panchayats for providing postal facilities; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) No, Sir. During 1987-88, 873 new post offices were opened.

(b) The ban orders have not been removed. However, according to the subsequent guidelines issued by the Ministry of Finance posts required under Plan Schemes may be created with the approval of that Ministry.

(c) The norms for opening of post offices in rural and urban areas are indicated in the enclosed Statements I and II. (*See* below).

(d) It has been introduced only on an experimental basis, in selected districts.

(e) An outline of the Scheme is furnished in the enclosed Statement-III.

Statement-I

Guidelines for opening of post offices in rural areas

1. Having regard to the Seventh Plan target of 6,000 new post offices in the rural sector, bulk of which has to be achieved during the remaining two Annual Plans 1988-89 and 1989-90, the Postal Services Board have decided that proposals for opening of branch post offices in rural areas will henceforth be regulated according to the following guidelines:

(i) A group of villages constituting a single gram panchayat will be eligible for a post office provided that (a) the aggregate population of the group of villages is not less than 3000 in normal rural areas and 1500 in hilly, backward and tribal areas and (b) there is no other post office within the group.

(ii) The post office will normally be opened at the headquarter village of the gram panchayat. If such a village falls within 3 Kms. of an existing post office, the post office may be opened in another suitable village within the same gram panchayat which fulfills the distance condition.

(iii) The 3 Kms. restriction can be relaxed in hilly areas in cases where such relaxation is warranted by special circumstances.

(iv) The minimum anticipated revenue will be 33-1/3 per cent of the cost in normal rural areas and 15 per cent of the cost in hilly, tribal and backward areas.

2. Classification of hilly, backward and tribal areas will be made according to the following criteria:

Hilly areas:

(i) "Special Category States", namely, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh & Mizoram.

(ii) Districts/Blocks/Talukas in other States or Union Territories identified by the Planning Commission as hill areas for purposes of Hill Areas Development Programme (HADP).

Tribal areas:

(i) States/Union Territories which have tribal population exceeding 50 per cent

of the total population, namely; Arunachal Pradesh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Lakshadweep, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram.

(ii) District/Blocks/Sub divisions/Tehsils/villages in other States/Union Territories identified Tribal Development Programme (ITDP).

Backward areas:

(iii) Areas identified by the State Governmntt for implementation of the Backward Area Development Programme under the Seventh Plan (Villages and Small Industries sector).

In view of the continuing ban on creation of posts, proposals for opening of new branch offices will be submitted by the Department of Posts to the Ministry of Finance for grant of exemption.

3. Instructions have been issued to all Heads of Circles to consult Hon'ble Members of Parliament in regard to opening of new post offices and give due and urgent consideration to proposals recommended by them in the light of the aforestated norms.

Statement-II

Norms for opening of post offices in urban areas

(i) Initially the post office should be self-supporting but at the time of the first annual review it should show a 5 per cent profit to be eligible for further retention.

(ii) The minimum distance between two post offices is now raised to 1.5 Kms. in cities with a population of 20 lakhs and above and 2 Kms. in other urban areas. No two delivery offices, however, should be closer than 5 Kms. from each other. Further, a delivery post office should have a minimum of 7 postmen's beats.

(iii) No extra departmental post offices will be opened in future in urban areas.

Statement-III

Schemes of panchayat Dak Sewaks

(i) A gram panchayat which has no post office will be eligible for the services of a panchayat dak sewak. The Gram Panchayat will, by a resolution, nominate a suitable local resident who is willing to serve as panchayat dak sewak and notify the name to the department.

(ii) The gram panchayat will be entitled to a monthly grant of Rs. 150/- from the postal department for engaging the dak sewak, the additional expenditure, if any, being met by the gram panchayat from its own resources. Additionaliy, the gram panchayat will also receive a commission for payment to the dak sewak on sale of postage stamps and stationery at the following rates:

Total sale per month	Rate of commission
Up to Rs. 100	5%
Rs. 101 to Rs. 200	7.5%
Rs. 201 and above	10%

(iii) The services of the dak sewak who will not be an employee or agent of the postal department but only a volunteer engaged by the gram panchayat will be supervised by the gram panchayat itself and will include the following:—

(a) Sale of postage stamps and stationery.

(b) Registration of postal letters for despatch (The sewak will issue provisional receipt and after the article is booked, the rgeular postal receipt will be given to the sender by the dak sewak).

(c) Collection of unregistered postal articles from the villagers for despatch to the post office, including articles posted in the panchayat letter box.

(d) Such other postal work connected with that gram panchayat as may be entrusted to the sewak by the Postal

Department including delivery of unregistered postal articles and notices to the local residents.

(iv) Delivery of registered and insured mail will continue to be done by the post office through its own extra-departmental delivery agents or other officials as at present. The dak sewak will also not be entrusted with booking or payment of money orders so that there are no accounting formalities involved in his work.

(v) The dak sewak will be attached to an existing post office from whom he will receive a suitable imprest of postage stamps and stationery. The imprest will be replenished as and when necessary on the sewak depositing the requisite cash. It is to this post office that the dak sewak will bring mail collected by him on a day to day basis for onward despatch and also receive the mail for delivery to residents of his gram panchayat, if required to do so.

(vi) The dak sewak will function from the panchayat Bhavan or other public place set apart by the gram panchayat for the purpose. A letter box will invariably be provided at the premises which will be opened by the dak sewak day-to-day and contents taken to the designated post office.

Price of Diphanhydramin Hcl.

3702. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the main criteria adopted by Kelkar Committee for exclusion of drugs is competitive structure and sales turn over less than rupees fifty lakhs;

(b) if so, what are the details of exclusion criteria on which Diphanhydramin Hcl was recommended for price decontrol while the trun-over is more than the above amount and is being produced by three producers;

(c) whether it is a fact Banadryl range of formulations which are based on this drug have monopoly and dominance in market share;

(d) if so, what is the definition of monopoly and dominance taken by Kelkar Committee along with the market share of Banadryl formulations and in what respect the definition differes from MRTP;

(e) whether it is a fact that producers have increased the price of Diphanhydramin Hcl. by 83.8 per cent; and

(f) if so, what was the earlier price and what is the present price alongwith the basis on which the price was increased?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) The Kelkar Committee adopted the following exclusion criteria for identifying Category II drugs:

(i) Exclude those drugs which are not produced in India, provided that the consumption is not significant either or in the near future.

(ii) To exclude those drugs the turn over of which has been less than rupees fifty lakhs in 1986.

(iii) To exclude all new drugs for which process of manufacture were developed indigenously from the price control list at least for the first 5 years.

(iv) To exclude those life-saving drugs and pharmaceutical products whose availability is far more important than the price. As the nature of demand is such that it is required less frequently but its non-availability is fatal. The notable examples of such categories are sera and vaccines.

(v) Exclude those pharmaceutical products of drugs where the domestic production structure is so competitive that there is little possibility that the consumers will be over-charged compared to the cost of production.

(b) Diphenhydramine was excluded from price control on 'exclusion alternative' criteria according to which drugs produced by at least 5 producers of bulk drugs and